

KENNEDY BRIDGE
over Saltwater Creek
Bundaberg



CEREMONY REPORT
on the presentation of an
ENGINEERING HERITAGE MARKER
on 5 September 2023
at Kennedy Bridge
Bourbong Street, Bundabeg

Prepared by
Allan Churchward
Engineering Heritage Queensland

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1. Introduction

Some 20 guests attended a ceremony on the 5th September 2023 adjacent to the Kennedy Bridge on Bourbong Street, Bundaberg in Queensland to unveil a marker and interpretation panel, awarding an Engineering Heritage Marker to the Kennedy Bridge built in 1899.

The ceremony was organised by the Department of Transport and Main Roads and Engineers Australia, Queensland Division. Representatives from these organisations, the local State Member of the Queensland Parliament and representatives from Bundaberg Regional council attended.

2. Invitation

You are invited to join us for the Kennedy Bridge Heritage Recognition Ceremony

Tuesday, 5 September 2023 at 10.30 am – 12.00 pm

The Department of Transport and Main Roads' (TMR) Kennedy Bridge, located on Bundaberg – Bargara Road (Bourbong Street) in Bundaberg, has been awarded an Engineering Heritage Marker under the Heritage Recognition Program of Engineers Australia.

The Engineering Heritage Recognition Program recognises historical engineering achievements across Australia to raise the profile and understanding of the work of past engineers across the country.

To commemorate the installation of the heritage marker and associated interpretation panel, TMR will be hosting an unveiling ceremony at the Bridge. TMR would like to invite you to attend the ceremony.

I'll be attending the ceremony on behalf of TMR, along with:

- Mr Bill Lansbury, Regional Director (Southern Queensland Region)
- Mr Mitchell Curd, Acting Manager (Operations & Maintenance)

Parking is available at the Kendall Flat cricket oval carpark:

- Google link: <https://goo.gl/maps/dVoKy9TRxQQ7Ck1B8>
- Attachment: Parking map

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the event in more detail please email bundaberg.office@tmr.qld.gov.au.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Kind regards

Brendan Clancy

District Director | Wide Bay Burnett

Program Delivery & Operations | Infrastructure Management and Delivery

Department of Transport and Main Roads

3. Program

Program

Tuesday 5 September 2023, 10.30 am - 12 pm

Time	Topic	Speaker
5 min	Welcome and purpose of event	Mr Bill Lansbury, Regional Director, TMR
5 min	Welcome to Country	Elder, Port Curtis Coral Coast Trust
5 min	Introduction to Engineers Australia	Mr Joseph Tam, Queensland President
20 min	History of Heritage Recognition Program, technical aspects of the award and history of Kennedy Bridge	Mr Allan Churchward, Engineering Heritage Queensland (EHQ) Committee
10 min	Kennedy Bridge's current contribution to Bundaberg transport	Mr Brendan Clancy, District Director, TMR
10 min	Official "unveiling" of Engineering Heritage Marker and photos	Mr Tom Smith, Member for Bundaberg
5 min	Closing remarks and thank you to guests	Mr Bill Lansbury, Regional Director
30 min	Morning tea	



Significant engineering restoration has been undertaken to ensure Kennedy Bridge's structural integrity for years to come.

You can view other recognised sites on Engineers Australia Engineering Heritage Register: engineersaustralia.org.au

Thank you for being part of this significant event

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Department of
Transport and Main Roads

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Kennedy Bridge, Bundaberg

Heritage Recognition Ceremony

Unveiling of Engineers Australia
Heritage Marker

5 September 2023



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Queensland Government

4. Interpretation Panel

The Interpretation Panel is located adjacent to the Kennedy Bridge on the south east corner beside Bourbong Street.



Unveiling the Interpretation Panel and Marker (L to R)
Nathan Brooks, RoadTek Representative, Joseph Tam EA Qld President,
Tom Smith, State Member for Bundaberg, Tony Cloke, RoadTek Representative



The Interpretation Panel and Marker located adjacent to Kennedy Bridge.

5. Media Release (by TMR)

MEDIA STATEMENT

6 September 2023

Bundaberg bridge receives heritage recognition

- Bundaberg's Kennedy Bridge has been awarded an Engineering Heritage Marker under the Heritage Recognition Program of Engineers Australia.
- Kennedy Bridge was assessed against several criteria including historical significance, creative and technical achievement, rarity, integrity and intactness.
- It remains a key part of the transport network of Bundaberg.

Nestled in the heart of Bundaberg, many locals may not realise that by using the Kennedy Bridge, they are driving across an incredible achievement in Australian engineering as it has remained in service for 124 years.

Kennedy Bridge, located on Bundaberg – Bargara Road (Bourbong Street) in Bundaberg, has been awarded an Engineering Heritage Marker under the Heritage Recognition Program of Engineers Australia.

Engineers Australia is the peak body for the engineering profession in Australia and is committed to preserving Australia's engineering heritage. The Heritage Recognition Program recognises historical engineering achievements across Australia to raise the profile and understanding of the work of past engineers across the country.

To receive this recognition, the Kennedy Bridge was assessed against several criteria including historical significance, historical individual association, creative and technical achievement, research potential, social, rarity, integrity and intactness.

On 5 September 2023, a brief recognition ceremony was held where Mr Tom Smith, Member for Bundaberg unveiled the Engineering Heritage Marker and an interpretation panel outlining the structure's history. A Welcome to Country was delivered by the Port Curtis Coral Coast Aboriginal Peoples Charitable Trust.

The Kennedy Bridge is known for being a prime example of bridge engineering and construction from the late 19th century in Queensland. At this time, a dialogue between old world sophistication and new world technology was taking place.

It was built to replace the dilapidated timber bridge built on the same site in 1878. The previous bridge consisted of three timber spans, the centre span having been reinforced with iron rods.

Modelled on the Victoria Bridge in Brisbane, the Kennedy Bridge is now the oldest example of this type of steel bridge design in Queensland since the Victoria Bridge was demolished.

Constructed by John McCormick and Son, the total cost of the bridge's construction was just under £7000.

During construction, many problems were encountered including the loss of imported steel from Glasgow, Scotland due to the tragic shipwreck of the Loch Fergus. The shipwreck occurred off the coast of Belfast, causing delays in the construction of the bridge.



The bridge was formally opened on 26 November 1899 by former Minister for Railways and Works, the Honourable J. Murray, who described the bridge as "one of the finest works of its kind he had seen in Queensland".

It is symbolic of the development of Bundaberg and the strengthening of its connection to the outside world.

Today, it is a working bridge and remains a key part of the transport network of Bundaberg. As the present owners of the asset, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has maintained the bridge throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries.

Quotes attributable to Transport and Main Roads Southern Queensland Regional Director Bill Lansbury:

"The story of the bridge's construction, and the difficulties and challenges faced in importing steel, contribute to understanding the significance of constructing a bridge like this at that time in Australia."

Quotes attributable to President of Engineers Australia Queensland Committee Joseph Tam:

"The purpose of the Heritage Recognition Program is to encourage conservation of Australian engineering heritage and to raise community awareness of engineering and the benefits it provides."

Explainer/fast fact and or further information (when required/relevant):

Although load limited to 42.5t, the bridge still carries 17,666 vehicles each day to and from the Bundaberg CBD, including about 1300 heavy vehicles to support freight movements and support the agricultural industry particularly sugar.

View all the Engineering Heritages sites that are recognised across the country on the [Engineering Heritage register](#).

ENDS

Media contact: TMR Media Unit, 3066 7060

6. Acknowledgements

Engineers Australia wishes to acknowledge the work of Margot Holbert who undertook the research and drafted the Proposal and the Nomination documents. Margot undertook the work whilst a final engineering student at the University of Adelaide. Margot worked with the guidance of Chair EHQ Andrew Barnes and EHQ Deputy Chair Allan Churchward.

EA also acknowledges the work of the staff of the Department of Transport and Main Roads, Bundaberg who assisted with the Nomination process and who organised the ceremony.

7. Photographs



Attendees at the ceremony



Engineers Australia Qld President Joseph Tam



EHQ representative Allan Churchward



Left to Right Mr Tom Smith, Local State Member,
Mr Mitch Curd, Acting Manager (Operations & Maintenance) TMR
Mr Bill Lansbury. Regional Director TMR
Mr John Learmouth. Bundaberg Councillor
Mr Joseph Tam, EA Qld President
Mr Allan Churchward, EHQ Rep.



Left to Right. Mr John Learmouth. Bundaberg Councillor
Mr Joseph Tam, EA Qld President.
Mr Brendan Clancy, District Director TMR
Mr Bill Lansbury. Regional Director TMR



Representatives from the local Engineers Australia Regional Group attended.

8. Media Article 7th September 2023

BUNDABERNOW

Good news from Bundaberg Regional Council

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Featured History

Bundaberg bridge receives heritage recognition

Contributed

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Bundaberg's Kennedy Bridge has been awarded an Engineering Heritage Marker. Photo: Contributed

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Located on Bargara Road (Bourbon Street), it remains a key part of the transport network of Bundaberg.

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19th century engineering

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Today, it is a working bridge and remains a key part of the transport network of Bundaberg.

As the present owners of the asset, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has maintained the bridge throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries.

Transport and Main Roads Southern Queensland Regional Director Bill Lansbury said the history of the bridge was tied to the engineering history of the country.

"The story of the bridge's construction, and the difficulties and challenges faced in importing steel, contribute to understanding the significance of constructing a bridge like this at that time in Australia."

President of Engineers Australia Queensland Committee Joseph Tam said the Heritage Recognition Program aimed to conserve and create awareness around engineering heritage.

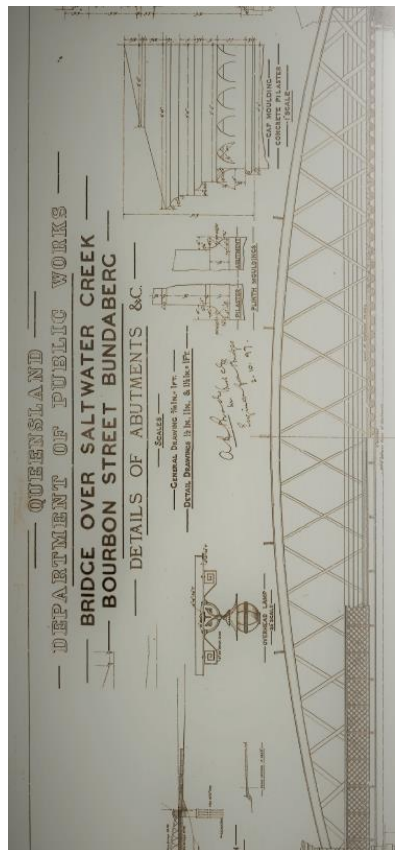
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10. The TMR Invitation Brochure.



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Kennedy Bridge, Bundaberg

Heritage Recognition Ceremony

Unveiling of Engineers Australia
Heritage Marker

5 September 2023



Kennedy Bridge (1899)

The Kennedy Bridge replaced the dilapidated timber bridge built on the same site in Bundaberg in 1878.

The original bridge was assessed in 1896 by Alfred Barton Brady, Engineer for Bridges and Queensland Colonial Architect, and found to be unsafe. Brady's new design was completed in 1899.

The Designer

Alfred Barton Brady (1856–1932), an English-born civil engineer and architect, migrated to Australia in 1884. One of Queensland's most important early engineers, he was associated with many major public works and known for his bridge design.

Brady had a distinguished career, rising to Government Architect and Engineer of Bridges in 1892 then Undersecretary in 1901, until he retired in 1922.



The Kennedy Bridge was designed and built in conjunction with Burnett River Bridge (1900), and modelled on Victoria Bridge in Brisbane (1897).

Brady also erected Lamington Bridge (1896) at Maryborough, one of the world's first reinforced concrete bridges.

The Kennedy Bridge is now the oldest example of Brady's steel bridge design still in existence in Queensland

The builder and the bridge

On 20 June 1898, the Works Department received tenders for the construction of the new Kennedy Bridge. John McCormick and Sons were awarded the contract to construct the bridge with work commencing in December 1898. Delays during construction included the loss of imported steel due to the tragic shipwreck of Loch Fergus travelling from Scotland.

The bridge is composed of a single steel span of two longitudinal hog-backed lattice girders. The span is 51.8m, identical to one of the eight spans of the Burnett River Bridge. It is carried on massive concrete abutments on pile foundations driven to 15.24m below sea level.

The roadway is formed of steel trough plates filled with concrete, covered with tarred metal, with concrete kerbs at each side. On the southern side there is a footpath.

At 11am on 25 November 1899, the new Kennedy Bridge was officially opened by the Honourable John Murray, Minister for Railways and Works after a short ceremony.

Construction cost just under £7000, equal to \$1.17 million in 2023

Recognition

In 2022, Kennedy Bridge was awarded an Engineering Heritage Marker under Engineers Australia's Heritage Recognition Program. As owner of this structure, the Department of Transport and Main Roads Wide Bay Burnett team is proud to receive this recognition.

Today, Kennedy Bridge has remained in service for 124 years. It is vital to Bundaberg's transport network:

- over 17,666 vehicles drive over it daily
- this includes 1300 heavy vehicles
- supports freight movements and the agricultural industry, particularly sugar

The construction of the Kennedy Bridge is symbolic of the expansion and development of Bundaberg.



THE END